Better Homes and Centers

Michigan Department of Social Services

Summer Time Fun
Issue 9 Summer 1986

PLAY IT SAFE

By Joel Gorch
Environmental Health Sanitarian

Outdoor play areas afford children a place to yell, jump, and rough-house without the restrictions imposed indoors. Children frequently display little fear or knowledge of the dangers which may be associated with playgrounds and their equipment. At first glance, most playgrounds appear very innocent and even familiar to supervisory adults. Persons charged with the responsibility of child care need to be aware that outdoor play areas and their equipment can pose serious safety hazards for children.

Surfaces

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, seven out of ten playground injuries are caused by falls. Hence, the type of playground surface provided is a major factor which affects the number and severity of injuries associated with falls.

A relatively smooth, well drained yard with good grass cover provides the most suitable surface. A surface composed of organic loose materials (pine bark nuggets or mulch, shredded hardwood bark) also provides protection to a child in the event of a fall. However, prolonged use and exposure to weather will cause such materials to decompose and become pulverized or mix with dirt and lose their cushioning properties. Continued maintenance is necessary with this type of surface. Inorganic loose materials (sand, pea gravel, shredded tires) provide another option but require frequent leveling to replace material that is pushed away from fall areas. Such materials may combine with dirt or other matter which reduces their cushioning properties. Pea gravel and similar surfacing may be difficult for a child to run or walk on. Depending on the type of inorganic material, particles and dusts may be produced which can blow into children's eyes, irritate the skin, nose, and mouth. Concrete, asphalt, and similar materials are not recommended for use under playground equipment because of their hard, unyielding characteristics. Regardless of the playground surface composition, it is very important that all holes and depressions which could cause tripping or falling be filled in.

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Most of us look forward to the spring and summer months as a time to engage in fun-type activities which take advantage of the warm weather. Many of us remember as children those activities which gave us many new experiences. We were introduced to a variety of animals at the zoo. We became aware of different foods and flowers and how they grew through gardens, trips to the farm and on walks through the park. Some of us even grew our own flowers or vegetables in some type of little container.

For children being able to see and touch all these amazing new things was unforgetable. Our senses of touch, sight and smell became a little bit more developed. And we became more sensitive people because of these experiences.

Take time this summer for a change of pace. Give your day care children opportunities to explore nature and the outdoors. Do things that might not otherwise be available to the children in your care.

This is also a time to become refreshed as a provider through a change in routine. Take advantage of the nice weather and have a great summer. Then when school starts and you are once again more confined to the indoors, you will feel better equipped to meet the challenges and demands so essential in providing quality child care.

Ted deWolf, Director
Division of Child Day Care Licensing

PLAY IT SAFE . . .

Continued from page 1

Surroundings

Playgrounds should always be separated from roadways, service drives, parking lots, etc., by a fence, wall, or other suitable type barrier.

Equipment Maintenance

Equipment should be firmly anchored in the ground by concrete with footings placed below ground to prevent tripping and to protect a child in case of a fall. Existing exposed concrete footings and worn surfaces where rocks or other hazards protrude should be padded or removed.

Swing seats should be lightweight canvas or plastic. Tire swings permit safe use by several children at one time and their safety record appears to be better than conventional swings. Holes should be drilled in tire swings to assure water drainage. Open ended "S" hooks attaching chains to the support frame should be tightly pinched closed.

Slip-resistant surfaces can be installed or painted onto climbing or gripping components of equipment. Brightly-colored paint or tape can make a potentially-hazardous protrusion on a piece of equipment more visible.

Homemade or community-built equipment made of logs, railroad ties, or landscape timber should receive special inspection. Rough edges, sharp corners, and loose or protruding nails, nuts, bolts, etc. should be eliminated by sanding them off. Nuts and bolts should be counter-sunk into the wood to eliminate protrusions or covered with smoothly-finished protective caps. Cedar and redwood lumber resist deterioration and are recommended in areas where the wood comes in contact with soil.

Equipment Design

Entrapment can occur when an equipment component or group of components form angles or openings that could trap any part of a child's body or a child's head. If part of an accessible opening is too small to allow children to withdraw their heads easily and the children are unable to support their weight by means other than their heads or necks, strangulation may result.

Clothing entanglement generally occurs when clothing is caught or entangled on accessible parts of moving apparatus, or components of equipment next to sliding surfaces — ladders and uprights, protective barriers, handrails, etc. Such accessible moving parts or equipment components should be designed so they cannot catch a child's clothing. When clothing is entangled, the equipment's or child's momentum is often great enough to cause loss of balance or an injury.

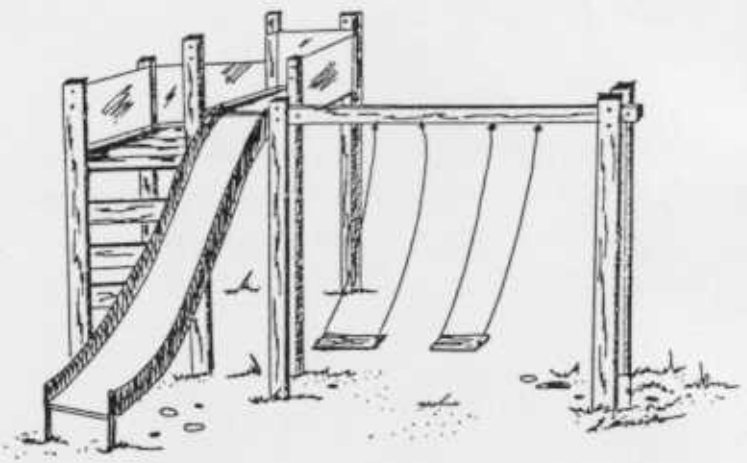
Sharp points are usually found on corners and edges, pinch and crush points, and protrusions and projections. Such hazards are generally associated with the construction of tubular metal or molded-steel equipment. Playground equipment should present no accessible sharp edges or protruding points or ends that could cut or puncture children's skin or catch their clothing.

Manufacturers usually provide self-locking nuts or other devices to prevent nut and bolt assemblies from coming apart. These fasteners and exposed ends of bolts should be covered with smoothly-finished protective caps which, when correctly installed, are not removable by hand. Similarly, exposed ends of tubing which can lacerate or puncture a child's skin on impact should be covered with caps or plugs. Open-ended "S" hooks that can catch clothing should also be avoided. If there are such open hooks, the ends should be pinched tightly closed.

Whenever possible, equipment with accessible pinch, crush, or scissor-like areas caused by adjacent moving components should be avoided. Unprotected moving parts on gliders, merry-go-rounds, or seesaws, for example, could crush or pinch a child's fingers.

Routine surveillance and maintenance is essential to sustain a safe outdoor play environment. In addition to inspecting the equipment, surface, and surroundings for physical hazards, check the ground daily for broken glass, sharp metal, litter and other hazardous items. Keep your playground a place where children can "play it safe."

Information contained in this article is condensed from "A Handbook for Public Playground Safety, Volume 1: General Guidelines for New and Existing Playgrounds," published by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207. The publication contains more specific information about playground safety and is an excellent reference source.



WATER SAFETY

By William Shipp
Camp Licensing Specialist

Constant and careful supervision is necessary to ensure the safety of all participants in water activities. Planning and follow-through are the best assurance of a safe program.

Babies who cannot support their heads should not be in the water.

Water programs for children under three years of age should be aimed at exploration and fun rather than instruction. They should include one adult with every child in the water. Never allow forced dunking. Swallowing large amounts of water can make children sick or even cause death.

Water programs for children over three should be related to each child's physical, mental and emotional maturity. Always stress a need for safety consciousness. When children feel comfortable with their surroundings they will be more apt to test themselves with new skills.

Ask parents to share information regarding their child's experiences and fears with respect to water activities and to get approval of their child's physician prior to starting a swim program.

Whatever swim area you use, visit it ahead of time. A supervised swim area is preferable to private facilities. Check the layout. Know the number and location of lifeguards; type and location of safety equipment; location of nearest telephone and emergency numbers, boundaries and markings of the area; and the posted rules.

If you use a private pool, do regular water testing; keep the deck clean and uncluttered; anchor all ladders; keep safety equipment accessible and in good condition; and secure drain covers.

If you go to the beach, check the weather forecast, the slope and conditions of the lake bottom and drop-offs, currents, area markings, condition of beach and docks, and location of emergency assistance.

Adults responsible for children in water need to know at least basic lifesaving, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first-aid and emergency procedures, location and use of safety equipment, swim skills, and basic child development. If you are not using a swim area staffed by people with these skills, you will need them yourself.

- *Swimming abilities are affected by medications, cold, current, waves, clearness of water, and length of time in the water.*
- *Life jackets and other personal flotation devices can be used as learning aides when they are sized and fitted to each child. Use only devices that will maintain the child's correct body position in the water and never use them as a substitute for proper supervision.*
- *Avoid diving and water slides because they require better comprehension, stronger swim skills, and greater body coordination than children have.*
- *Expect that all rules be followed.*
- *Be alert, children's curiosity can lead them into dangerous situations.*
- *Toileting accidents in the water pose a significant health problem. Ensure that a safe, clean, warm place is available for diapering and dressing.*
- *Children learn by repetition. Maintain the same sequence of steps each time the child is involved in the water activity.*
- *Children under three years of age should not be in the water for more than 30 minutes.*
- *Children over three years of age may be capable of slightly longer program periods.*
- *Young children need frequent rests. Alternate swim activities with games and exercise on land.*
- *Always treat all children as non-swimmers at the beginning of any swim activity. Restrict them to shallow water unless they can swim or are with an instructor.*
- *Count heads at least once every 5-10 minutes.*
- *If you take children to a public swim area, devise a system for spotting them easily such as colored bathing caps of T-shirts.*
- *Make sure children cannot wander unsupervised into the swim area.*

REMEMBER: Always have someone overseeing the entire activity.

It is more important to develop safety knowledge than activity-skill knowledge.

Do not leave the area until a headcount has been made.

Above all, NEVER ALLOW ANY CHILD TO SWIM ALONE OR WITHOUT TRAINED ADULT SUPERVISION.

SUMMER FIRST AID

By Sandra Settergren
Family Day Care Home Licensing Consultant
Ypsilanti

The first step in summer safety is making sure you have a well-stocked first-aid kit that includes:

- Adhesive strip bandages in assorted sizes.
- Sterile gauze pads in assorted sizes.
- Adhesive tape.
- Tweezers.
- Ace bandages for wrapping strains and sprains.
- A sling.

Review your kit on a yearly basis and have one in each vehicle.

If you have children who suffer from hay fever and allergies, you can reduce the effects of airborne pollens by keeping your windows closed during the day and using your air conditioner. Even if you don't have an air conditioner, plan activities for the late afternoon and evening when pollen levels are lowest.

To treat insect bites, such as mosquito bites, cleanse the area with soap and water and avoid scratching. To take the bite out of a bee sting, be sure to remove the stinger as soon as possible as it can continue to release poison into the system. Next, apply ice and keep the area elevated. Swelling is almost always due to inflamation, not infection. If any hives appear, light headedness occurs or breathing becomes difficult, go to the nearest emergency room immediately. The reaction can become worse each time a person is stung. Make sure you know if any child has a history of severe reactions to bee stings and have the parents provide you with a bee-sting kit and instructions for use. Take the child to an emergency room immediately following a sting.

Any sprain should be elevated and iced for the first 48 hours. Heat should be applied following that time. Stay off it for two weeks with no vigorous activity at all to prevent reinjury.

For burns, apply cold water or ice initially to reduce the pain. Cover lightly with a clean cold wash cloth or sterile gauze to keep oxygen from the burned area. Wash the area to prevent secondary infection. Cover again with a sterile gauze or a band-aid. do not break blisters. If they do open, use sterile scissors to cut off the flap of skin. Any facial burn, genital burn or burn across a joint where continued movement is necessary should be seen by a physician.

The most important step in taking care of cuts is to apply direct pressure until the bleeding stops. Then flush the wound with lukewarm or cold water. Cover with a bandage. If you are not sure if the injury requires stitches, have it looked at by a physician.

If a child is exposed to poison plants, he should take a shower immediately to reduce the chance of breaking out. Report the incident to parents and suggest they see a doctor if there is a large rash.

Any suspected case of food poisoning should be seen by a physician immediately.

It can be difficult to decide when a trip to the doctor or the emergency room is necessary. Any time you are not sure of the seriousness of the injury, get professional help immediately.

SUMMER SUN: EASY DOES IT

By Elaine Berry
Ingham County Public Health Nurse

Summer is a time for young children to explore and learn many things about the out-of-doors unencumbered with clothes, boots and all that winter means. Along with this freedom, there are real potential dangers from over exposure to the sun and heat. Awareness of these potential dangers and how to avoid them can ensure a safe and healthy summer.

The skin of young children and infants is very sensitive to the sun. Protecting them during exposure can help avoid that difficult task of trying to heal a severe sunburn once it occurs.

Direct summer sunlight is the most harmful in the middle of the day from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Even on a cloudy day or in the shade, burning can occur. Because the sun rays reflected off water and sand are more powerful, take particular care when the child is at the beach or out in a boat.

Newborn babies should not be exposed to direct sunlight for any length of time. Three- to six-month old infants can begin to be exposed so that they will develop a tan. Begin with five minutes a day and increase by five minutes each day to a total of thirty minutes. Do not expose an infant for more than 30 minutes without further protection including lightweight loose clothing and a bonnet to cover the exposed areas.

Put light clothing on older children also. Toddlers and preschoolers also need to build up exposure. Half an hour a day in the full sun is all they should have for the first two to three days or until a tan begins to appear. They can wear light cotton shirts or T-shirts in the water. Be particularly careful of the areas of skin which are least often exposed to the air or sun such as a child's bottom. Provide shade when on the beach or outdoors and limit the time spent in the sun. Fair skinned children (redheads or blonds) will burn more easily and will take longer to build up a protective tan. You may need to be careful with them throughout the summer.

There are a number of protective creams or lotions. However, sunscreens are better than regular suntan lotions. A preparation which cuts out most of the shorter ultraviolet rays but allows the longers ones to get through is the best. Apply the sunscreen to areas that are most likely to burn such as the child's nose, ears, cheeks, and shoulders. Reapply every time a child comes out of the water. If, in spite of your precautions, a child does burn, here are ways to alleviate the discomfort.

First, keep the burned areas from direct sun until the redness is gone. Soothe a mild burn with cold water and calamine lotion. Then cover it with something soft. Avoid greasy products such as ointments or butter and preparations that contain benzocaine (it can irritate the skin). See a physician for a severe burn which causes blisters, chills, fever, nausea or considerable pain.

The other source of potential danger in summer is excessive heat. Keep clothes as few and light as possible to prevent discomfort. Avoid plastic pants. If babies become irritable from the heat, there are several ways to help them. If damp from sweat, fanning helps to cool. If dry, sponging with warm water helps. Sponging and then fanning will cool the hottest baby. Monitor the older child's activity during excessively hot days. Provide plenty of fluids when the child is playing or exercising. Clothing should be light. Enforce frequent breaks in the shade to drink fluids and cool off.

There are three main reactions to excessive loss of salt and water in extremely hot weather: heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

The most common reaction is heat cramps; severe cramps in the limbs and abdomen, without a fever. Give the child a glass of cool water containing ½ tsp. table salt every fifteen minutes until the cramps subside.

Heat exhaustion is a slightly more severe condition. The child appears cold with pale skin, dizziness, weakness, heat cramps and no fever. Have the child lie down in a cool place with feet elevated and administer salt water every 15 minutes until he feels better. If nausea occurs give water in small sips. If the child vomits, stop giving water for awhile. the child then needs to rest for several days. See a physician if the child appears sick from heat exhaustion.

The third and most severe reaction to heat is heat stroke. Heat stroke can be life threatening. With heat stroke the child is hot with flushed skin, high fever, fainting and delirium. Cool the child off as rapidly as possible by sponging with cool water. Give a conscious child cool water to drink. Take the child for emergency care as quickly as possible after temperature has been reduced to a safe level.

These simple, practical measures can help ensure a safe, healthy summer for the children in your care.

SAFE MEALS FOR SUMMER OUTINGS

By Aliene Mills
Extension Home Economist
MSU Cooperative Extension Service
Lapeer County

What are the keys to packing a safe outing meal? Bacteria can cause food poisoning. All they need to grow is the right combination of time, temperature and moisture.

Food-borne illness can cause diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and other unpleasant symptoms which can last for several hours or even days.

- Be particularly careful when preparing the food. Always use clean hands, utensils and work area. Wash hands, utensils and cutting surfaces after they've been used with raw meats, fish and poultry to avoid cross contamination. Sanitize your cutting board by scrubbing with chlorine cleanser or a solution of 1 tablespoon chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water.
- Keep hot foods hot in insulated containers — 140°F or hotter.
- Keep cold food cold — 40° or colder. Include a frozen drink, reusable ice pack or ice frozen in a plastic container.
- If you don't have an insulated lunch box, use a metal one instead of a bag for better insulation. Some have a special plastic container that may be filled with water and frozen.
- Select foods with care. Foods that will stay safe without refrigeration include:

  peanut butter and jam or jelly
  nuts
  hard cheeses
  crackers
  canned foods (in the can)
  fresh foods (in the can)
  fresh fruits and vegetables
  dried foods
  bread
  cookies, cakes, fruit pies
  hard-cooked eggs in the shell
  marinated vegetable salads

- Freeze a sandwich or use frozen bread to keep it cold longer.

Don't:

- Pack perishable items without taking the special precautions listed above.
- Leave the meal in a hot spot like the sun or in a parked car.
- Save food with perishable ingredients from one day to the next.
- Let perishable foods stand at room temperature for more than two hours.

Remember:

- Sneezes, coughs, infected cuts or sores, pets, your mouth, hands and hair all contain bacteria. Keep them out of food to help prevent spoilage or food-borne illness.

ANT POISON LINKED WITH CHILDREN POISONINGS

The Center for Environmental Health Sciences recently received a report of insecticide poisoning involving a toddler from northern Michigan. Upon further investigation, it appears that Poison Control Center records indicate that arsenic-based ant poison has been the cause of numerous such poisonings statewide.

The product is applied in the home for control of ants by placing a few drops on 1" × 1½" pieces of cardboard, included with the product, and distributing these cards where ants have been noted.

Children, especially toddlers, have been exposed through ingestion of the insecticide from the treated paper. Complete records of similar poisonings are being sought by the Center for Environmental Health Sciences as documentation of the extent of intoxication related to the use of insecticides in Michigan.

If you are aware of such incidents, or for further information, contact John Hesse, Center for Environmental Health Services, Michigan Department of Public Health, telephone 517/373-8050.

Reprinted from "The Circular," Vol. 47, No. 17, August 19, 1985. Gloria R. Smith, Michigan Dept. of Public Health.

SUMMER SURVIVAL TIPS FOR PROVIDERS

Submitted By Staff and Students at 4C of Detroit/Wayne County

1. Create full-body photo and fingerprint files for each child in preparation for field trips — Parents may have recent photos and fingerprint records which they can share; or with parental permission you could create your own. Maybe a community group which has sponsored fingerprinting campaigns will be willing to come to your program and fingerprint the children. Having photos and prints on file may save valuable time should a child get lost or abducted.

2. Be prepared for rainy days and other times when you will be forced to remain indoors. Set aside toys and equipment for each age or something special to do during these times.

3. Provide, if possible, separate areas for older children for long term projects, something they can work on for several days or weeks, like a giant puzzle. The requirement to always put things away and start over can be frustrating.

4. Identify other providers with summer programs in your neighborhood and invite them to plan a joint picnic or party. You and the children will probably both enjoy meeting new people.

5. Involve older children in the planning for special activities and outgoings. They can also have job assignments such as baking snacks for the picnic, shopping for items, etc. For programs that have mixed ages, older children may enjoy planning some special activities for the youngest children.

6. Be sure to check with your local 4c office, library, recreation departments and public information service for information about special summer events, and programs for children.

7. Gardening projects can offer children of all ages the opportunity to see how things grow.

8. Summer provides many hours for outdoor play. Inject new energy into your program by taking indoor activities (blocks, painting, table games, story time etc.) outdoors.

SUMMER SOLUTIONS FOR FALL CHALLENGES

At the February 19th meeting of the *Livonia Director's Coalition*, the following Summer Survival Tips were given for (and from) Directors:

Summer and Fall Enrollments — Have them finalized by March if possible.

- Have a Pre-Summer Open House.
- Have the school-age children evaluate your program at the end of the Summer (great for program planning ideas/changes.)

Staff Meetings — Have only one mandatory staff meeting a month (generally July and/or August).

Staff Vacations — Establish a policy and explain in the interview, that staff are not to take vacations in September when new enrollments begin and consistent staff are most critically needed.

Ordering Equipment and Supplies — Do ordering of equipment and supplies early enough (no later than June 1st) to beat the rush. Have staff turn in their inventory requests the week before.

Fall Program Planning — Try to keep the last week of August with as low enrollment as possible, so teachers can plan for the Fall program, and decorate their rooms.

Showing Prospective Enrollments Through the Center — In August, when the number of requests to visit are generally higher, try to space the number of parent visits throughout the week, so that you can still get your work done. Ask the parent to make an appointment at this time of year, if possible.

New Workers — Plan a group orientation in August.

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SUMMER FUN

Compiled By Carole Grates
Center Licensing Consultant, Saginaw

Summer brings sunshine and flowers, fresh air and soft showers. It also brings frustration to day care providers who don't like to duplicate school year activities, but do want to offer a well-planned program.

To help you make this a very special season for your children, we have compiled a list of summer activities that providers across the state have shared with us. Take them as they are or expand on them, and make this a summer to remember for you and your children.

Who Can Blow The Biggest Bubble?

Provide cups, soap bubble mixture, and a heavy wire bubble blower for each child. Have a contest to see who can blow the biggest bubble.

Grow A Garden

Have the children plan and grow a garden. Use the vegetables for snacks as they mature. Use the flowers to brighten the rooms as they bloom.

Paint On A Sidewalk

Paint pictures on a sidewalk with water and big paintbrushes. If the walks are yours you might add water based paints or food coloring for more permanence.

Bike Day

Have children bring their bikes to the home or center. Decorate the bikes and have a parade. School age children could take a neighborhood bike trip with a picnic lunch.

Spring Cleaning!

This could be the theme for a week. Take the chairs, tables, toys, and other washable items outdoors. Choose different items for each day. Provide water, soap and sponges. Group time can center on cleanliness and cooperation.

Balloon Day

Plan all the activities around balloons. Paint balloons; bat balloons with hands; kick balloons with feet, tell a balloon story; do science experiments with balloons.

"Car" Wash Day

Have children bring a riding vehicle to wash. Provide hoses, sponges, pails and old towels. You can even make rain by squirting the hose in air and riding through it.

School-Age Carnival

Have the schoolagers plan and put on a carnival for the other children.

Water Festival

Plan relay and individual games with water. Provide 3 or more rotating stations equipped with sponges, butter bowls, buckets of water and balloons. The winners get the losers wet.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES
FLOWER AND PLANT COLLECTION

By Nora Thompson Wadlin
Center Licensing Consultant, Escanaba

Provide a thick mail order catalog for each young school-age child. Show children how to pick the heads of wild flowers. Place them in a position they want the pressed flower to have. A "juicy" flower can be placed between a folded tissue to dry quicker in the catalog.

A drop of glue will attach the flower to a piece of cardboard. Then a flower arrangement can grow as the collection grows.

Leaves can be preserved this way also.

GARDENING WITH CHILDREN

By Betty Garlick, M.S.U.
Child Development Specialist and Master Gardener

Have you considered gardening with children in your care? You could have many learning experiences and a lot of fun! Limited space? It is possible to have growing gardening experiences for children using containers on window sills. Billy still recalls planting a bean in a flower pot, watering and watching as the plant emerged, discovering the blossom and then the green bean itself. Containers can be placed indoors and, in warm weather, on a porch or patio. Containers can vary in size and many varieties of vegetables, berries and flowers are developed for this kind of gardening.

Should more space be available in back yards or borders, small outdoor gardens can give children the full range of gardening experiences: preparing the soil, planting the seeds, caring for the emerging plants, watering, weeding, loosening the soil, learning how long it takes for seeds to come up, taking care not to step on tender plants. At this point simple information about mulches and compost might be useful and then, of course, you can proceed right on down to the fully-developed vegetable for cooking, tasting and sharing. You can note and discuss colors, shapes and sizes of the developing plants.

Gardening projects can be enhanced by discovering the different shapes and sizes of seeds and the resulting fruit or vegetable. You can cut up old seed catalogs for planning your gardens as well as for other art projects.

A method of gardening that seems to be particularly suited to young children is the "Square Foot Method" where the vegetables and flowers are put in four foot segments with walking space all around. In each square foot a different vegetable or flower is planted so that the garden can be tended easily without the constant need to caution children about the problems of plants they may trod upon.

The older child in care might wish to do some growing experiments to see what happens when plants lack nutrients or water. This would provide a good opportunity to liken the needs of plants to the needs of children for the proper kinds of food for their growth.

Children can learn much from gardening and it is one of the activities that will continue to grow and build for a lifetime.

Gardening:

- Provides children and adults an opportunity to commune with nature and be a part of it.
- Provides a sense of discovery, excitement and accomplishment as children see the results of their efforts.
- Gives children and adults an opportunity to have a shared learning experience.

Gardening **may also** help children:

- Learn colors, shapes and sizes and explore differences and similarities in seeds and growing plants.
- Develop gardening skills.
- Become familiar with the sequence and timing of gardening activities.
- Develop social skills as they share produce with their friends.
- Develop interests in tasting and preparing vegetables they have grown.
- Learn about garden insects, both friend and foe.
- Learn how to build up soil with mulch and compost.
- Learn to plan ahead and make decisions.

HERE COME THE "BIG KIDS"

By Mary E. Madden
Educational Coordinator
Kinder-Kare (Michigan Child Care, Inc.)

Start preparing early. Since five centers offer a summer program for six to twelve year olds, we start with a meeting to get organized. By the time our program starts, our program directors have attended approximately three meetings and are ready for a smooth transition from preschoolers to school-age children. The key to this smooth transition is early planning and preparation.

For a successful program, set goals and a daily schedule first. Next, themes and a list of related field trips. Some examples of themes might be first aid, physical fitness, camping, nutrition, and drama. Related field trips might be to the baker, Red Cross, restaurants, a local theater, a roller rink, and local parks. At the end of each summer evaluate field trips, themes, and activities and eliminate failures. This is also a good time to record any new ideas or successes so they won't be forgotten the following year.

Next make an equipment inventory list. Any broken or worn equipment needs to be discarded. Along with equipment, inventory art supplies to discover and correct any shortages before the program begins.

Another important areas of preparation is marketing. This means making your program known. Tell parents what it is that makes your program special. Perhaps it is a special project at the end of the summer or a strong library program. Maybe you can promote a swimming program or offer achievement awards. Publicize what makes your program unique. Use posters, letters to parents, radio or newspaper coverage, or speak at public schools. Word of mouth is of course your best advertising.

Finally, when planning a summer program for six- to twelve-year olds, overplan, especially rain-out activities and games. You can never have enough of these ideas. Recheck field-trip reservations to make sure there are no cancellations. Send thank you notes to every place you visit. Stress safety at all times. Plan a special project for the end of the summer when boredom of the routine starts to set in.

Last, but certainly not least, be flexible. Listen to the children. Let them plan activities and have choices. If everything is planned well in advance, the transition should take place smoothly and your summer program should be a success.

Why take

field trips?

A trip may help children:

- **find out about their surroundings**
- **sharpen observation skills**
- **clarify misconceptions, correct misinformation, and broaden knowledge**
- **increase language skills**
- **uderstand and appreciate the community and people in it**
- **practice safety habits.**

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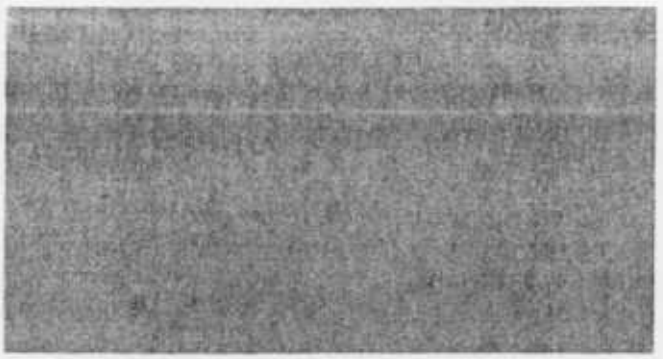

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PROVIDER'S CORNER

There has long been an interest among family and group day care providers in establishing a statewide organization to work on our behalf. Planning for such an organization is now under way. If you would be interested in joining or working with this group, please contact your local day care home providers' association or one of the following people:

Liz Alery
755 Mooreville Road
Milan, MI 48160
(313) 439-8861

Laverna Calloway-Cash
1220 Westport Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
(313) 995-0158

Margaret Crawley
Human Services Bldg.
5303 S. Cedar Street
P.O. Box 3161
Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 887-6996

Janet Everingham
2355 Pinecrest
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(313) 971-5066

Penny Mitchell
10835 Kingston
Huntington Woods, MI 48070
(313) 398-8018

PROVIDER'S CORNER

Has your center been in operation 10 years? Do you serve children between the ages of 2½ and 6 and offer one or more special services (such as: after school or drop-in care)? Are you located in an urban area? Do you charge about $1.35 per hour? If you answered yes to most of these questions, you have a lot in common with the 169 centers who reponded to our questionnaire.

There are about 2,000 child care centers in the state and our 169 respondents volunteered themselves instead of being randomly selected, so we can't claim that our results are statistically valid. But, as a child care center operator, you might be curious to know how you compare with your colleagues. And the survey did yield some surprising results. For example, 12 of the 166 centers that responded to this question have been in operation 25 years or longer! Only 52 were relative newcomers with five or fewer years in existence. More than half (99) of our respondents operate centers in urban areas and almost as many (87) have met the changing needs of families by offering special services such as after-school care or transportation.

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PROVIDERS'S CORNER . . .

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About half (88) of the centers provide care only for children in the age range 2½-6 years. Interestingly, we found that the average fee for services was about $1.35 an hour for both full day care charging by the week and nursery school programs charging per session.

Age Groups Served

Ages	No. of Centers	% of Sample
2½-6 yrs. only	88	52%
2 wks.-2½ yrs. only	3	2%
2 wks.-2½ yrs.; 2½-6 yrs.	17	10%
2½-6; 6 yrs. & older	23	14%
2 wks-2½ yrs.; 2½-6 yrs.; 6 yrs. & older	37	22%

Special Services Offered

	No. of Centers	% of Sample
No special services	82	49%
One or more special services	87	51%
**********		
After school care	53	31%
Transporation	23	14%
Drop-in	36	21%
Infant	31	18%
Night Time	3	2%

Full Day

Weekly charges reported by 35 centers:

High $90.00 per week
Low $37.50 per week
Average $54.00 per week

Full Day

Daily charges reported by 43 centers:

High $20.00
Low $ 5.50
Average $10.60

Both reflect an average of $1.35 per hour.

Partial Day

Monthly charges reported by 10 centers:

All sessions 2½-3 hours
High $60.00 for 3 day session
Low $32.00 for 3 day session (4 centers)
$47.00 average

High $37.00 for 2 day session
Low $15.00 for 2 day session (6 centers)
$25.00 averge

Partial Day

Daily charges reported by 11 centers:

High $5.15 per ½ day (2½-3 hrs.) sessions
Low $1.75 per ½ day (2½-3 hrs.) sessions
$3.65 average per half day

Monthly and daily charges average $3.50 per half day session for 2½-3 hour programs.

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